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342 invited for building lots, only one-fourth of the land was taken up because it was too expensive and too inaccessible.

We have given some attention to the possibility of establishing a mortgage bank to assist in financing private building in the cities. We believe that such an institution will ultimately be desirable and necessary, but, owing to limitations of funds, we have not recommended that one be established before 1961. Meanwhile, the project might well be studied. Any mortgage bank that might ultimately be created should be designed primarily to help finance low-cost housing, particularly since the construction of housing for the more well-to-do elements in the population has apparently not been significantly hampered by lack of funds.

The possibility of gradually abandoning existing rent controls should also be studied. The elimination of rent control on new building might be a suitable first step and might have the incidental advantage of discouraging the continuous influx of new people into the urban areas.

341 v COMMUNITY SERVICES

The mission's provision of an average annual investment of £S 14.3 million for community services must be regarded as extremely tentative. In the last analysis, no final program can be recommended until a thorough analysis of municipal finances is completed. At present, comprehensive data on municipal expenditures and anticipated financial resources are lacking. We suggest that a study of this subject be undertaken promptly, so that the magnitude of a program of municipal services can be determined in the light of the municipalities' own resources and the contribution which the central government can make to them either by loans or by grants.

343 *Roads and Streets*

The construction of roads and streets has been second in importance among municipal programs. Except in the large cities, paving is generally limited to a few central streets because of its cost.

Hereafter the construction and maintenance of all types of roads connecting settlements, including the portions passing through the settlements, should be the financial responsibility of the central government. Municipalities, freed of this burden on their budgets, should take care to spend

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their road funds on types of pavement suitable to the needs of the locality, choosing those methods which make greatest use of local materials and hand labor and depend least on machinery and imported materials. Stone-paved roads, of which there are excellent examples in Syria, probably provide the answer for most of the settlements where stone is readily available, and the government should be able to provide asphalt to most communities. Many of the roads in villages, particularly those which do not carry motor vehicle traffic, could be improved through cooperative community endeavor, and this should be one of the objectives of the community development program we have recommended.

Electricity

Electricity is of economic importance to those communities which depend upon it for productive power and not merely for light. The mission recognizes fully the significant developing influence which the availability of electric power can have upon a community. Useful though it is, however, we suggest that a major effort to provide electric power primarily for lighting be deferred until the more urgent problems of water supply and sewerage have received attention.

Landscaping

Syria's broad and nearly waterless steppes have led to cities and villages virtually without trees, a situation to which the devastation of the first World War contributed greatly. Even cities like Damascus, lacking neither greenery nor water, have large areas which remain bare. The planting of trees, especially shade trees for the streets, should be a concern for all Syrian settlements. This, of course, calls for a study of the most suitable types of trees for the different regions, and the establishment of nurseries, as recommended in Chapter 3 of the Main Report.

Local committees should do the planting, once the problem of water supply has been met. Where streets are narrow, there is much to be said in favor of planting trees inside the house plots so that the inhabitants themselves will take care of them; the trees will then shade the streets without taking up needed road space. In recently planned areas where the streets may be unnecessarily wide, a strip on either side might be turned over to the people living on the street on condition that it be planted with